The World of Letters As Others See It



A Pioneer American Publisher.

MATTHEW CAREY had a career even more active and influential. The publishing house he founded in Philadelphia in 1785 still exists, though under a different name, and is one of the oldest in this country. Carey was what we would call to-day an enterprising general publisher. He had a vision for aims and methods far ahead of his day, for he sought to organize and stimulate the book trade, was first president of the shortlived American Company of Booksellers, and planned the "literary fairs," of which one was held in New York in 1802, much like the Marshall Field and Wanamaker's and other book trade fairs of the present. He published the poems of Philip Freneau, poet of the Revolu-tion; he published the first American best seller—Mrs. Susanna Rowson's tearful novel, "Charlotte Temple," wept over by successive generations. From Carey's publishing house came the works of Noah Webster, the dictionary maker; the early books of Washington Irving, Cooper and Charles Brockden Brown and Weems'
"Life of Washington."—From "Books and Bookmaking in the United States." Helen E. Haines in the Library Journal.

W. B. Yeats's Reminiscences.

MOST young Irishmen have been busy during recent years fighting Ould England, or among themselves, or chronicling the war doings, and so we have had less of them in authorship, pure and simple, than we could have desired. But Mr. W. B. Yeats has slowly gone forward with his reminiscences, and now they are in sight, under the poetic if not very personal title, "The Trembling of the Veil." Even so, it is the personal record of an interesting life, shaped to literary and artistic ends by the influences which surrounded Mr. Yeats in his early days His father, who eventually settled in New York and became a much liked figure there, had a large circle of gifted friends, and intercourse with them helped to launch the son. Morris, poet, master printer and Socialist, and Henley, essayist, poet and journalist, are two men who come prominently into Mr. Yeats's survey of the past; but, indeed, it is alive with people and events.—From the London Granhic.

Herrick's Daffodils.

Herrick was the true flower poet, how ever, and he has the most beautiful thoughts and fancies about them. He hated them to fade, even to close, and his verses "To daisies—not to close so soon" are charming. He wrote of the primrose, the tulip, the violet, of "strawberry beds," "bands of cowslip," and "crowns of honeysuckle." His lines "To profidile" are among the gens of Eng. Daffodils" are among the gems of English literature:-

Fair daffodils, we weep to see You haste away so so As yet the early rising sun Has not attain'd his noon.

From "Flowers in Literature," in John o' London's Weekly.

would never have dared to draw himself in them. Pepys did draw himself in his Diary, or some part of himself, and we cannot understand how this incredible creature can have passed through life dis-guised as a normal official and Fellow of the Royal Society. The fact is that we all try to pass through life disguised, and novels are content to give us the dis-guises. Sometimes they dare to tell a little of the truth about all men in their freak characters, and then we say that it is amusing but impossible. Dickens, for instance, is accused of exaggeration, but he is great because he understates less than most novelists, because he observed and could deduce some of the real facts of human nature from his observation.— By S. Clutton-Brock in the London Times

When the Republic Was Young.

FOR the first quarter of the nineteenth century the chronicle is scanty, save for the few names previously mentioned. Newspapers were the chief vehicle of our native writers. Irving, Bryant, Whittier, Poe, N. P. Willis, Joseph Rodman Drake, all made their first appearance in newspapers. Mrs. Trollope visited us in 1827, and reported her highly distasteful impressions in her famous book, "Domestic Manners of the Ameri-cans." In it, she gives one chanter to cans." In it, she gives one chapter to literature and her opinion is as frank as Sydney Smith's and equally justifiable. She is able to mention three novelists. three poets, two preachers and one his-torian who possessed some claims to consideration; beyond them, a vacuum. Such book production as there was was confined almost entirely to reprints of English works. In 1820, when Irving and Cooper began their careers, our book duction was seventy per cent. British. Then gradually there came an increasing interest in and representation of native writers, and by the mid-century the names that still stand as the first fruits of American literature—the names of Emerson, Holmes, Hawthorne, Mrs. Stowe, Longfellow, Dana and Channing and their follows, were rising upon the and their fellows-were rising upon the horizon.-From Books and Bookmaking in the United States. By Helen E. Haines in the Library Journal.

The Copyright of Letters.

SOMEBODY, rather shocked by the letters which our women autobiogra-phers have been publishing, writes to me asking, "How can it be done? Doesn't copyright in those letters belong to the people who wrote them?" That is so, but if an engaging lady prints them without saying "by your leave," what wan be said? and if she pleads for permission beforehand how can she be refused? The clear thing, if you are a celebrity, is that you must not let yourself go in epistles women friends unless you are prepared to find them making "copy" of you. Every-thing, it is said, is fair in love and war, and present day autobiography is becoming something between love and war.— From the London Graphic.

John o' London's Weekly.

Stranger Than Fiction.

WHENEVER we read a good biography
—and there are few of them—we are

and there are few of them—we are

of his Canadian essay that "the cities of his Canadian essay

ing had less need of compression than it has to-day. Indeed, Thoreau did traffic in so much detail that in "The Week" he had no room for half the incidents, sights and sounds, which that fortnight away from Concord yielded him. One might as logically condemn Meredith for the wealth of allusion in "An Essay on Comedy"; for Thoreau was no sophisticated, bored traveler, whirling round the world in the belly of the iron horse and seeing only one new thing a day. The world smiled fresh for him and was constantly surprising him with its novelty. With the natural phenomena within the bounds of Concord he was familiar. But outside the village gates lived barbarians.—From Concerning Thoreau's Style. By J. Brooks Atkinson in the Freeman.

Maeterlinck's Translator.

IKE many fascinating men, Telxeira de Mattos was full of apparent contradictions. He was laborious and frivolous; a purist and a punster; a philosopher and a dandy; at once very earnest and deliberately "pococurantist"; very grave and very merry. On the basis of his religious faith he cultivated "the art of life." He was, in the few years when Mr. McKenna knew him, an invalid and a great sufferer, but his gayety of spirit seems to have been unconquerable. In both his arts—translation and life—he gained by being a foreigner in England. He was a Dutchman (till he became naturalized during the war) of Portuguese and Jewish descent, and, living all his life ir England, he kept the freshness of a foreign eye on English ways, some of which never ceased to amuse and puzzle him.-From the London Times.

W. H. Hudson in Later Life.

HUDSON used to say to me that he had only enough to live on when he was too old to enjoy it. For nearly the whole of his literary life in England he was as neglected a writer as Jefferies, and with far less excuse, since Hudson is a classic and Jefferies was an artist only on the rare occasions when he was not trying to be one. And contemptible as are the world's valuations of its great men Hudson certainly went half way to meet them. I went many times to his cheerless lodgings in Notting Hill, but he was as oblivious of their gloom as of the whole of London, with its salons, clubs, dinner parties, literary fashions and social life. Few men of letters had even met him. He died an old man; he as a master of a peculiarly delicate, precise and melodious prose; he was a literary genius who was the best field naturalist in Britain and a devotee of natural history.—From the London Nation.

Marryat in America.

ONLY for a short time was this quiet, idle life to last, for in 1837 Marryat left for America, and that same year his "Snarleyow, or the Dog Fiend" was published, though it was really written in the previous year. "The Phantom Ship" also belongs to 1837, though it was not issued in book form until two years later. Both these works—though a new departure in style—are among Marryat's best seven W—and there are few of them—we are the detail"; and Horace Greeley remarked of his Canadian essay that "the cities are described to death"—a journalistic are described to death"—a journalistic criticism of eighty years ago, when writ-

and the Werewolf. He had an eventful two years in America. He visited Canada and took part in the fighting against the rebellious French population in 1838. His experiences were recorded in "A Diary in America," published in 1839. He returned home in the spring of that year and went to live at 8 Duke street, St. James's.— From "Captain Frederick Marryat, R. N." By S. M. Ellis in the English Bookman.

R. L. S. and Edinburgh

STEVENSON denied that Edinburgh. Sike Venice, counts lovers in her train. Surely when he wrote that he forgot Sir Walter Scott was a lover so robust and so assured that he took his mistress for granted and carried her along with him solden starting to scales. with him, seldom staying to analyze her charm. R. L. S. the analytic, the harassed sufferer from east winds, found the at-traction of Edinburgh "romantic in the narrowest meaning of the term. Beautiful as she is, she is not so much beautiful as interesting . . . In a word, and above all, she is a curiosity." But for all his analysis he was her lover still.
Only a lover could have written as he did
(assimilating Scott in the passages already mentioned) of "this dream in
masonry and living rock," of "the banner
on the castle battlements and the amelia on the castle battlements and the smoke of the old town blowing abroad over the sub-adjacent country."-From the Illustrated London News.

Moore's "In Single Strictness."

HAVE been reading Mr. George Moore's I latest collection of short stories, "In Single Strictness." It is in the author's latest and best style, and runs placidly, a quiet river of narrative, as transparent in its clarity of style and as beautiful in its play of lights and shades as a trout stream in a chalk country. Still I cannot but deplore Mr. George Moore's highly commercial methods of publishing his books, which under the guise of artistic sensitiveness deprives that part of the public which most needs books, and is not able to afford high subscriptions, of the advantage of acquaintance with one of the chief literary figures of our day. Ap-parently even this austere rule is not strictly kept, for we understand that five copies of this book were sent out for re-view, although what newspapers were the chosen recipients of them, and what the special services to literature may be which mark them out for this distinction. I do not know.—From the Saturday Re-

Dick Heldar's Bill of Fare.

THERE are two instances in modern I fiction of a monotonous surfeit of food, described by the authors so vividly as actually to produce a slight sensation of nausea while reading. In "The Light That Failed" Kipling tells us how Dick Heldar, having in evil pride informed his editor that he had no need of an advance on the cash due to him in a month's time, makes up his mind that he can just run to four weeks of sausages and mashed potatoes for every meal, as being the best value in cheapness and solid nourishment. Dick munched through to the bitter end, but his experiences must have ruined many a palate for sausage od in Fiction,"